

These social insurance programs have blessed America with a reputation of protecting her citizens. As the Declaration of Independence famously states, our government has the responsibility to secure the rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. In the past sixty-five years, the Social Security Administration has been safeguarding these rights for citizens who otherwise may easily be overlooked. Our great nation has earned its reputation for greatness in partial measure because of the accomplishments the Social Security Administration has achieved in the past sixty-five years.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the Social Security Administration, Congress, and the American people for their commitment to the social security system. I look to the past and recognize the magnitude of the Act's effect; I look to the future and envision the achievements that are yet to come. I ask my colleagues to join me in this celebration and recognize the sixty-five years that Social Security has been improving America.

A TRIBUTE TO OFFICER BRIAN ROSE

**HON. GARY G. MILLER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mr. GARY MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Officer Brian Rose, of the Montclair, California Police Department, for earning the Montclair Chamber of Commerce Officer of the Year Award for 1999.

Officer Rose began his law enforcement career in 1993 with the Adelanto Police Department. While in Adelanto, he served as a K-9 Officer on the HINET task force which targeted drug transportation on the desert roadways.

In 1997, Officer Rose was hired by the Montclair Police Department. Since his arrival, he has been an outstanding law enforcement officer. Last year, Officer Rose maintained a stellar record of arrests, averaging over 14 apprehensions each month. Many of these arrests were felony drug charges which stemmed from routine traffic stops. Officer Rose also made over 20 DUI arrests, assisted in the discovery of a methamphetamine lab in the city, and aided in the investigation and arrests on the charge of kidnapping for ransom. A vehicle pursuit and stop conducted by Officer Rose resulted in the arrests of parolees, the recovery of a firearm, drugs and over \$20,000 in drug monies. Most recently, he stopped an out-of-state plated car which resulted in the arrests for car theft and for a murder warrant.

In addition to his work on the streets, Officer Rose has been training to become an "Officer in Charge" for his shift, as well as performing the duties of a Field Training Officer. Officer Rose serves as the Montclair Police Department's Drug Recognition Expert and trainer.

Officer Rose's outstanding service to the City of Montclair distinguishes him as a true American hero, worthy of this Congress' praise and gratitude.

TRIBUTE TO CARL L. BLUM, P.E.  
UPON HIS RETIREMENT AS DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

**HON. STEPHEN HORN**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, today I honor and recognize Mr. Carl L. Blum, on the announcement of his retirement as a Deputy Director of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works.

Carl has served the people of the County of Los Angeles with nothing less than the utmost integrity and professionalism. During his years of service at the Los Angeles County Flood Control District and Department of Public Works, Carl demonstrated an unwavering commitment to making Los Angeles County a better—and safer—place to live.

After 21 years with the Los Angeles County Flood Control District, Carl joined the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works. In the many capacities he has served in, Carl has played a large part in the successful management of public works in the County. I want to commend Carl in particular for his integral role in working with local, State, and Federal officials and members of the community to construct the Los Angeles County Drainage Area Project (LACDA). It is a testament to Carl's work—and that of other officials with County and Corps of Engineers—that the LACDA project has been one of the most successful public projects in Los Angeles County's history.

Mr. Speaker, I am saddened to see Carl retire, but I want to congratulate him on his many accomplishments and thank him for his dedication to the people of Los Angeles County. I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing Carl health and happiness in his future endeavors.

NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMISSION  
ON TAX REFORM AND SIMPLIFICATION

**HON. JIM DeMINT**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. Speaker, the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. This was true when our founding fathers decided to pledge their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor to secure freedom and democracy in our country. It is also true of our work in Congress, where even the most difficult tasks must begin with a single step.

Today we are here to take the first-step on an issue crucial to the American people and to me—fundamental tax reform. My friend ROB PORTMAN and I are introducing legislation creating a national commission on fundamental tax reform and simplification. The Portman/DeMint bill establishes a commission to study tax reform, and report to Congress with findings and recommendations, so we can go forward.

A similar commission was passed as part of my friend STEVE LARGENT's bill which would sunset the Federal Tax Code and allow Congress to debate a replacement. I am still hopeful the Senate will do the right thing and take up that bill. However, it is becoming increasingly clear that this is an issue that, if we hope to make serious progress, we must have a serious study. A serious and comprehensive report to Congress and the President will allow us to move forward on this issue with some foundation.

The Tax Code has become so intrusive, it invades the daily decisions of families and businesses. I know this from my own experience in starting and running a small business, as well as from raising a family. As Americans, I know we can do better.

There is no question that fundamental tax reform is desperately needed. The Federal Tax Code is 7 million words long, a patchwork maze of complexity and confusion. It is intrusive, invasive, and overly complex—as my constituents continually remind me.

The majority of Americans now turn to tax professionals to prepare their tax forms. This is hard to believe, but it is true. Many have no choice—they simply do not understand all the tricks and traps. Unfortunately, many of these same tax professionals are calling for tax reform and simplification as well. I have spoken with accountants and tax professionals from my district who have told me of their struggles and uncertainty.

This is not just my district. In 1998, Money Magazine asked 46 tax professionals to calculate a hypothetical family's tax responsibilities. Not one got the correct answer, and no two even got the same answer. When tax professionals do not understand the Federal Tax Code, what about American families?

There are exemptions you may never know you qualified for, and deductions you forgot to take. There are different rates, and different dates by which you need to file different forms to qualify for those rates. There are ways in which money must be moved through a complex series of traps to avoid paying maximum taxes, and there are mine fields of forms you may never have known existed, which you needed to file last week to avoid the fine you just received. And there are people who make their living mapping out the maze and guiding others through this code. I do not fault these people—it is a good living, and they are only dealing with something that we in Congress created. But is this the best we can do? Is this in keeping with a government of the people, by the people, for the people?

The Internal Revenue Service, which is generally made up of honorable men and women, has been given the task of managing this monster. It takes 136,000 people to administer our federal tax laws. The FBI employs less than 30,000—and they combat terrorism.

Since 1986, there have been over 5400 modifications to the Tax Code—and it is still not fixed.

We must return fairness and simplicity to our federal tax policy. I recognize this will not be an easy task, I know that some are comfortable with the way things are, but I believe it is the right thing to do.

I believe we are most secure when we are most free, and the complexity and confusion